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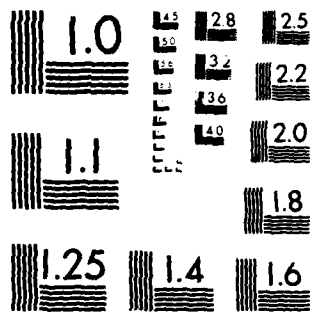
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USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM

TAKING CARE OF SOLDIERS

INDIVIDUAL ESSAY

by

Lieutenant Colonel Paul E. Blackwell  
Infantry

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SELECTED  
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US Army War College  
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# ABSTRACT

AUTHOR(S): Paul E. Blackwell, LTC, Infantry

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Regardless of the rapidity of modernization, the technological advances in equipment or the complexity of doctrine, the most precious asset of the military is the individual soldier. Thus, the most important responsibility of any leader is to take care of soldiers. Prerequisite to this charge is a clear understanding of soldiers. This essay provides the basis of understanding and then a means of taking care of soldiers through setting standards, counselling, supervising and disciplining.

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The Army of the 1980s is in the midst of an unparalleled modernization effort. We have complicated that effort with a dramatic reorganization of our divisions and are caught up in a series of major changes without a significant increase in end strength. There is the obvious concentration on major items of equipment such as the M1 tank and the Bradley Fighting Vehicle. Despite the rapid flow of the river of advancement, I remain convinced of one factor. Regardless of all the "things" we add to our inventory, the future success of our Army and our nation depends on the individual soldier. Nothing will ever replace that most precious of all assets--the American soldier striving to accomplish a mission, whatever it may be, to the best of his or her ability. This essay focuses on that soldier in terms of what is expected of those men and women blessed with the fortune to lead these soldiers.

The volumes of books, essays, articles, research studies and related publications on leadership could fill a space the size of Building 4 at Fort Benning. A small sampling of these references can be found in FM 22-100, Military Leadership.<sup>1</sup> Every military officer and senior noncommissioned officer who has served successfully in repetitive troop leading positions has become a self avowed expert on the subject of leadership. Our service schools incorporate leadership training in their curriculum. Considering the wide coverage which leadership receives, I will not attempt to provide a dissertation on leadership traits or qualities. Rather, this essay will address leadership at the soldier level. The fundamental prerequisite is the understanding and love of our soldiers. If you have ever watched soldiers charge a hill in the August heat of Fort Benning or Fort Bragg, break track in the mud or snow of Hohenfels, repair an engine or

other piece of equipment in subzero weather at Grafenwoehr, then you have an appreciation for the capability and willingness of the key ingredient in our Army. A leader who has never been caught up in the phenomenal drive and determination of soldiers has never experienced true satisfaction. A leader who has not had tears in his eyes as he watched soldiers accomplish the impossible or execute the possible with near perfection has not experienced the true reward of a leader or commander. The undying energy and eagerness of a soldier will soften the hardest heart and bring tears to the eyes of the toughest leader. I often call to mind a great soldier, Lieutenant General Livesey, whose sincere compassion for soldiers brings tears to his eyes whenever he talks about them.

Senior leaders at corps, division and brigade level constantly charge subordinates to take care of soldiers. That charge is the most sobering and noble of all charges. The leader who takes care of soldiers will always succeed. In my opinion, the commanders at brigade and above issue the challenge to subordinates and at battalion and below the real work gets done. In other words, the commander at brigade and above is more of a manager--a collector and allotter of resources. The battalion commanders and subordinate leaders in the chain of command are executors of the policy. These officers and noncommissioned officers are the ones who actually take care of soldiers. Accordingly, this essay is designed to outline how those leaders discharge this most important responsibility. In these writings, I will expand on the fundamental prerequisite of a concern for people. Moreover, I will discuss what I feel are the four major factors involved in taking care of soldiers--setting the standard, counseling, supervising and disciplining.



### UNDERSTANDING SOLDIERS

↙ A prerequisite to effectively taking care of soldiers is the need to understand soldiers. This does not require a background in psychology or formal training in the complexities of motivational behavior. This does require, however, a complete openness on the part of the leader to become personally aware of the soldier, his background, his family, his likes, his dislikes, what he does in his free time, what he eats, what he doesn't eat, who his friends are and so forth. The more you understand about each individual soldier, the better able you are to provide for his welfare and thus enhance unit effectiveness. ↗ The following quote reinforces this point.

Leaders address themselves to followers' wants, needs and other motivations, as well as their own, and thus they serve as an independent force in changing the makeup of the followers' motive base through gratifying their motives.<sup>2</sup>

The majority of young E5s or E6s charged with the responsibility to take care of four to nine soldiers have received little formalized leadership training. At best, they may have attended a Brigade Leadership Course or equivalent, or the division or equivalent Primary Leadership Course. Even those NCOs who have attended the Primary NCO Course (PNOC) or Basic NCO Course (BNOC) require leadership training reinforcement plus practical experience in applying classroom techniques in actual situations. Structured courses provide a degree of formalized training that is totally dependent on the quality of instructors and the responsible commander's interest. The key training of the young leader is achieved through unit conducted NCO training, both formal and informal. In TOE units, most battalion CSMs are responsible for administering and supervising the NCO Professionalism Program (NCOPP). The quality of this program depends on the active involvement of the CSM and the full support of unit first

sergeants and their senior NCOs. This does not mean that senior NCOs by virtue of rank understand how to take care of soldiers. There are entirely too many senior NCOs who know little to nothing about the subject and are allowed to "get by" by senior officers. Senior NCOs, who by reason of poor assignment patterns or lack of professional desire don't take care of soldiers, must be trained and failing that, rapidly eliminated. Poor leaders produce poor soldiers resulting in poor, unprepared, incapable units.

In reality, the most significant preparatory training a new NCO receives is through the examples of the NCOs he serves under. NCOs learn leadership through practical on the job training and by attempting to imitate those leaders they most admire and respect. The best leaders form the best units, not because their soldiers are better than the rest, but because the leader is better. A strong leader trains future leaders.

An additional source of guidance for the young NCO is The Army Non-commissioned Officer Guide (FM 22-600-20). This booklet devotes six pages to the subject of leadership. These few pages are filled with superb tips for the NCO and charges him to, "know your job, know yourself and know your soldiers."<sup>3</sup> FM 22-600-20 offers an excellent challenge to the leader, but requires greater detail on taking care of soldiers.

I do not intend to provide detailed demographic data on the soldier of today, however, there are several points which I feel are significant to understanding soldiers. Of course, there are exceptions to each of these, however, the information provides the junior leader points to consider if nothing more.

-- Due to availability of qualified personnel, the educational level of young soldiers is increasing. In 1982, 86.2 percent of all Regular Army non-prior service enlistees were high school graduates.<sup>4</sup> This higher level of education gives implication to more inquisitive, quicker learning, more eager subordinates.

-- Young people entering the service are not driven to do so by an overwhelming desire to defend their country. The motivation of duty, honor and country is not an enlistment selling point. This fact should be evident from our massive recruiting effort--it focuses on personal gains not national loyalty or preservation of freedom. Young people are enticed to adventure, to excitement, to learn a skill by a catchy song with stimulating film clips that point out, "it's a great way to start;" and challenge youngsters to "be all you can be." Never doubt, soldiers can be molded to loyalty, devotion, duty, honor, country; however, these are not the motivating factors that insure the recruiter achieves his quota. Young men and women embark on a service experience as a job.

-- The Volunteer Army is less a reflection of society than the draft Army. There are fewer junior soldiers with an already developed skill.

-- Soldiers are not prepared for the regimented military style and thus the initial entry experience can be a serious emotional shock. This is not only true of initial entry and basic training, but is equally true when a soldier enters the individual replacement pool. Imagine the impact on a young man who is brought into the service given individual and advanced training that provides him about 45% of the skill he needs for his MOS and is shipped off to Europe. This can be even more traumatic when his first association with the Army has been in new facilities, such as exist

at many of our training posts, and upon arrival in Europe he finds pre-World War II billets with poor heat, infrequent hot water and little space.

-- The family as the fundamental structure of American society is in a state of decay. Divorce is commonplace and there is an ever increasing number of children raised without the benefit of both maternal and paternal guidance. In far too many cases the result is young adults who lack discipline and fail to have a full understanding of the consequences of being responsible for their actions. In many cases this lack of family experience breeds independence but not necessarily a properly focused independence.

-- Few individuals enter the service with preconceived notions. The opinions that are formed are largely a result of the leadership they receive through example and guidance.

-- New enlistees are apprehensive about their new experience. They want to do well, but are unsure as to what is expected of them. Remember that the majority are coming from an academic environment where the expectations were established in the classroom through identified evaluations and success was associated with achieving an acceptable level of performance through written or oral evaluations.

-- Individuals in like circumstances tend to group together and develop an informal structure. A leader in this structure is identified by reason of intelligence, physical power, dominating presence or demonstrated ability. Such an informal structure tends to undermine formal organizational systems.

-- Young men and women are extremely inquisitive. They seek to find out all they can through all available sources and are subject to assimilating information without due regard to the source. Likewise, they

tend to seek acceptance and display a tendency to "try things" in an effort to achieve acceptance and be part of the group.

The above points provide a basis for understanding soldiers. Not all points apply to all individuals, but they can be considered as departure points in our quest to take care of soldiers. The list is very incomplete and brief, but provides a framework of understanding. Much more could be stated about society, moral attitudes, alcohol and drug abuse among teenagers, sexual permissiveness, crime and related issues; however, these would only exaggerate the point. The key to understanding soldiers is acceptance of them as individuals and a continuous evaluation of them in response to the leadership and guidance they receive.

Through practical experience and study, the leader will develop a better understanding of the motives, values and goals of soldiers. This personal knowledge will enhance the leader's ability to properly care for soldiers. The Army is providing a tremendous boost to this learning experience by a completely new, easily readable and dramatically improved manual on military leadership. The coordinating draft of this new FM 22-100 was distributed for comment in January 1983.<sup>5</sup> Once the final document is completed and distributed, the manual is a must for every junior leader from corporal to captain.

#### SET THE STANDARD

Probably the most important aspect of taking care of soldiers is to clearly identify the standard. Soldiers must understand what is expected of them. A lack of clear direction causes unnecessary apprehension and a blind staggering to achieve an acceptable, yet undefined standard. Supervisors who readily chastise subordinates for failure to accomplish a task when a clear standard has not been identified are not leaders. The Army is

task, condition and standard oriented. It is of great importance to specify the task and conditions which apply, but it is of even greater importance to clearly delineate the standard. A simple example--a soldier can be directed to clean his weapon, but unless he knows the standard, he is unlikely to meet the expectations of his leader.

The simplest and best method of setting the standard is by living the standard--leadership by example. Soldiers will follow a dynamic, disciplined leader who says "do as I do." This leadership by example should encompass all functional areas and include both on duty and off duty conduct. A leader who fails to set a high standard in personal conduct off duty cannot expect such a performance from his subordinates. This is an area of resounding weakness among junior leaders today. Young NCOs and officers have the mistaken idea that once they leave their appointed place of duty, they are off duty and have no obligation to continue to set the example. This is the greatest source of disciplinary problems among junior leaders. The incidents of misbehavior range from adultery to drunk driving, to alcohol related incidents, to wife and child abuse, to drug abuse to homosexual conduct and even criminal acts, including rape, robbery and murder. Of course, these acts of misconduct among leaders pertain to a relatively small number, however, they do occur and reflect a weakness in our young leaders that requires the concern and involvement of senior NCOs and officers.

In taking care of soldiers by identifying the standard, the leader must set the example in all areas. This includes personal appearance, military discipline, military bearing, barracks maintenance, training, physical fitness and all other areas which relate to soldier involvement. Numerous pages could be written on each of these subjects, however I will

limit my comments to only two which I feel require additional emphasis-- appearance and physical fitness.

Leaders at all levels must set the standard in appearance. This means the leader must first know the standard; secondly, set the example in appearance; and, thirdly, enforce the standard. There is no excuse for leaders not to know the standard; Army regulations and command implementing directives provide the standard. Yet, there is still a problem. Senior leaders fail to set the example and/or correct junior leaders and the same failures permeate the ranks of the junior leaders. Even the slightest failure must be corrected through on the spot corrections without regard to rank or position. I recall a LTC attending the US Army War College who wore the black pullover sweater with the green windbreaker. When corrected, his initial reaction was resentment at being corrected followed by the explanation that he didn't know. What an unacceptable excuse when the regulations that govern our appearance are clear and abundant! Equally appalling is the lack of understanding by senior officers at the Army War College as to the proper headgear to wear. These leaders of the Army are the ones who must enforce the standard, but because they are "out of sight" of soldiers, they fail to set the example in appearance. This is a clear example of a failure to set the example at all times. It becomes extremely hard to enforce a standard that you personally fail to follow.

The Army has identified a standard in physical fitness and weight control. Regrettably, even though the highest leaders of the Army have spoken and written on these two critical areas of personnel readiness, some of these key leaders have failed to set the example. It becomes difficult for a general officer to espouse a policy of weight limits when he fails to meet the standard. The same is true of a general officer or other senior leader who fails to achieve the Army standard on the over forty physical

fitness test. Such hypocrisies do not go unnoticed by subordinate leaders or soldiers and, consequently, even though the standard is identified, its effectiveness is reduced by poor example. The same corollary holds when a brigade or battalion commander sets a standard he cannot demonstrate by example. Only a poor leader would set a standard for his subordinates to run five miles in forty minutes when it takes him forty-five. Standards must be consistent and demonstrated by the individual who sets the standard.

Associated with the achievement of a standard should be a sense of accomplishment. Hence, standards should not be set low, but at such a level that effort is required to achieve the standard. This means that not everyone will achieve the standard on the first try, however, the desire to achieve it, will surely motivate and build confidence. The achievement of the standard will result in an enhancement of technical or tactical knowledge or attainment of desired performance levels.

Leaders must never fail to recognize those who achieve the standard. This action not only rewards those who succeed, but also encourages others to strive for success. Maximum use should be made of all available means of recognition. One method is through the use of awards. Recent Department of Army action has provided the battalion commander with the ability to award the Army Achievement Medal and the brigade commander, the Army Commendation Medal. Commanders should be responsive to subordinate leaders' request for presentation of awards. Impact awards, those presented on the spot for outstanding accomplishments, are very beneficial. Deserving soldiers should also be recognized for outstanding service upon change of station or departure from the service. There are individuals who cry that the frequent use of awards cheapens the award and destroys the



effectiveness of the system. This cry should be disregarded, as long as the criteria for presentation of awards is consistent and uniformly applied. A small piece of cloth and medal can pay tremendous rewards in terms of motivating and recognizing soldiers--in other words this technique is one method of insuring we care for our soldiers. Stockrooms filled with unissued awards don't serve any desirable purpose.

Other means of recognizing soldiers who achieve the standard include use of certificates of appreciation, certificates of achievement and certificates of service. These can be inexpensively obtained at battalion or company level and used liberally. I recall inspecting soldiers in the barracks and noting the pride associated with an individual who proudly displayed a wall of certificates. What an inexpensive way to make a young soldier feel like a winner! Another excellent program is the Farewell Breakfast. These are most effective at battalion level when good soldiers scheduled for departure during a specified period are honored at a breakfast, where they are recognized and presented a certificate of service. This event should include recognition of only the good soldiers and not the marginal or ineffective ones.

Numerous other comments could be made and examples cited about the enforcement of standards. However, the key points to remember are that the standard must be clearly identified, the leader must set the example and a sense of accomplishment must be associated with achieving the standard.

#### COUNSELLING

Counselling . . . a process of listening, communicating advice, instruction, or judgment with the intent of influencing a person's attitude or behavior.<sup>6</sup>

Soldiers who receive sincerely concerned and effective counselling from their seniors show a high regard for the Army and lean strongly toward reenlistment or a career.

These two quotes are from FM 22-101, the Army manual on leadership counselling. This document is a superb guide for the counsellor and is a must for every leader to read and study. Much information can be found therein on the counselling environment, basic counselling skills and a series of role playing situations. Since FM 22-101 provides excellent advice on counselling techniques, the following comments on taking care of soldiers through counselling are directed toward the need for counselling. All too often, counselling is perceived to be negative; that is the result of an identified deficiency. This is totally not the case and a belief that must be corrected. Leaders must use counselling as a means of positive reinforcement as well as discussing weaknesses and shortcomings. Counselling serves as a means for the leader to get to know the soldier and to better understand him as an individual. This individual exchange serves as a basis for the development of a relationship between the leader and subordinate.

Upon arrival of a soldier in a unit, he should be counselled by his immediate chain of command. Ideally this will be from battalion commander down to first line supervisor. The urgency of this initial counselling is reflected in the earlier points concerning understanding soldiers, specifically informal structure of groups and the inquisitive nature of young men and women. If the chain of command does not rapidly get to the new soldier, others will and these are as likely as not the undesirable influences. This initial counselling should serve as an orientation. This is the opportunity for the leader to begin his relationship with his new subordinate, to start learning all he can about the soldier, to set the standard and start the soldier's progression in the right direction. This is especially important for soldiers coming from AIT or OSUT. These

youngsters lack a lot of the basic skills to be fully qualified in their MOS, are normally apprehensive, homesick and susceptible to outside influence. In short, the leader can rapidly become the source of knowledge and guidance or allow other soldiers or informal structure leaders to assume the leadership role. Most battalions have an initial orientation checklist which was developed by the battalion, brigade or division/installation. In every case, a checklist should be used to trigger the leader on items to cover with the new arrival. In addition, during the initial inprocessing phase, the first line supervisor should obtain the job book provided by the previous unit or training station, or in the absence of a job book, obtain all available documents on the individual training and proficiency level of the soldier. A counselling record should be started on each soldier with the records treated as privileged and private information. All records of counselling, both formal and informal, should be retained in the counselling file.

For the newly arrived soldier the first line supervisor should insure that a responsible and knowledgeable member of the unit is assigned as his sponsor. This sponsor can be of tremendous assistance in helping the new soldier adjust and become part of the unit. The new soldier has someone to answer his questions and show him around the new post. A sponsor is especially critical when the newly arrived soldier has dependents, a more and more frequent likelihood for today's soldiers.

Counselling too frequently connotes a formal discussion between a superior and a subordinate. In reality, counselling can be as simple and as short as an on the spot correction or telling a soldier he did a good job. Records should be made of all counselling, even if this is an after the fact memorandum for record. Of course, counselling that is intended to assist a soldier in solving a problem or correcting a weakness may be longer

and more involved. One word of caution should be emphasized in problem related counselling. The chain of command should attempt to solve problems. However, all too often the first line supervisor "beats his head against a wall" trying to solve a soldier's problem, which could be more easily resolved higher up the chain of command. The important point is that each echelon of the chain of command should attempt to work the problem, but not get overwhelmed by it. The better solution is to elevate the problem.

A critical aspect of counselling is performance oriented counselling. This is a frequent counselling session, at least monthly, which is programmed on the training schedule, and is designed to allow time for the first line supervisor to provide the soldier an assessment of strong and weak points of his performance of duty and discuss ways in which that performance may be improved. The soldier has the opportunity to learn and take action prior to an evaluation report and the supervisor has the opportunity to guide and motivate the individual for continual progress. This performance counselling should include performance, conduct, career development, personal problems, future training, job book status and SQT among other subjects.

Quite simply, counselling opens a two way communication between the supervisor and soldier and provides a forum for an exchange of information. The soldier can learn of the personal impact of Army policies and programs and the chain of command can keep abreast of situations affecting troop morale, welfare and readiness. Problems and possible solutions can be identified and directed to those in the chain of command able to take appropriate action.

## SUPERVISING

Regardless of how well a soldier understands the standard or how thoroughly he is counselled, he must be properly supervised. Supervision is an important aspect of insuring that soldiers perform according to the stated standard and further insuring that assigned tasks are properly completed. In a very real sense, supervision is a feedback mechanism that allows the supervisor to assess the performance of subordinates, influence the process as required and provide input for counselling. Supervision allows the supervisor to evaluate the effectiveness of his leadership and at the same time further reinforce his position through leadership by example. By the presence of the leader, the soldiers are more confident, more resolved, more united, and more cohesive. Correspondingly, the unit's effectiveness is enhanced. Soldiers require and expect the presence of leaders to set the example and provide the guidance regardless of the task. This means that when track maintenance is scheduled the leader is in the motor pool also, not "catching up" on paperwork. This also means that unit integrity should be enforced in every endeavor. For example, instead of sending one man per platoon on a trash detail, send one fire team under control of the fire team leader. Likewise, conduct guard mount by platoon, send a squad under squad leader control for the S4 ammo detail, etc. There are a thousand reasons why this approach won't work, but my experience tells me that not only can it be done, but rather it must be done. Not only does this approach strengthen unit cohesion, but also it allows the leader to grab opportunities for training his men. These may be short, informal periods, however, they lend themselves to "hip pocket training." The leader knows what the weaknesses of each of his soldiers are and can design instruction to fit their needs. For example, if his squad has a

relief on guard mount, he can work on a series of SQT soldier manual tasks before or after guard mount and between reliefs. This approach also puts the soldier under the supervision of his chain of command rather than a new, unfamiliar, ad hoc organization.

Another aspect of supervision is through inspections. The first line supervisor should inspect his soldiers and their equipment daily. He should be responsible for the appearance of the billets and the common maintenance or beautification tasks assigned to his soldiers. These inspections serve as a means for the leader to determine compliance with barracks' standards, personal hygiene, serviceability and completeness of equipment, and thereby make an assessment of the readiness of his personnel.

Supervision is not only a duty hours responsibility, but rather must be anticipated by the soldier twenty-four hours a day. This is a difficult message to get leaders to understand. Experience has shown that the failure of leaders to supervise soldiers after normal duty hours, especially in the barracks, has resulted in disastrous consequences. Uncontrolled barracks invite crime, drug abuse, alcohol abuse, indiscipline and deter unit morale and cohesion. When the leadership is not actively involved in the barracks, the informal structure takes over and the bully takes charge. The results will be frequent incidents of fighting, destruction of government property and erosion of the effectiveness of the chain of command. Soldiers must be supervised in the barracks. One method is to have at least one leader of each platoon makes frequent visits to the barracks at random during after duty hours and on weekends and holidays. Where incidents presently exist, the number of leaders should be increased to the level required for the leadership to reassume control. The key to control of drugs, alcohol and misconduct in the barracks is leader involvement. On a controversial note, the barracks are military facilities where soldiers

live and where a clear standard must be set and enforced. These are not private facilities and; therefore, not the same as an apartment off post. Thus, since soldiers must be ready to fight in defense of our nation; alcohol has no place in the barracks--it is a detriment to combat readiness. Young soldiers, many away from home for the first time, cannot be thrown into an unconstrained alcohol environment and be expected to resist temptation. They join the crowd and suddenly have a drinking problem. Leaders have a responsibility to insure that this does not happen. The key is supervision and enforcement of a clearly identified standard.

There is a tendency, especially among younger leaders, to shun supervision of the mundane duties such as maintenance, care and cleaning, details, guard duty, range operations or post support. These types of requirements, even though absolutely essential, tend to be detrimental to unit cohesiveness unless the leader is visible, involved and supervising. Any leader can be enthusiastic about supervising a squad, fire team or platoon in a deliberate attack. The true leader will ensure adequate supervision of subordinates at all times regardless of the activity.

#### DISCIPLINING

Just as a reward or recognition should be associated with the attainment of a standard, a price must be associated with failure to meet a standard. Soldiers must learn to be responsible for their actions and relate success to achieving a clearly defined standard. When the standard is clearly defined and a soldier fails to meet the standard, then the leader must analyze the situation, determine why this failure occurred and take action to motivate the soldier to achieve the desired standard. In this regard, discipline should be a means to inspire soldiers to achieve

the desired standard. Of course, discipline may refer to punishment, obedience or even self-control, but beyond any definition is the desired outcome of discipline--a cohesive, capable unit composed of loyal, motivated, skilled, responsive and confident soldiers who share a common bond of unity. The common bond may be care, concern, friendship, devotion or it may be a commonality of purpose as fundamental as survival or as noble as a sense of duty, honor, country. This bond is what holds soldiers together, builds cohesion and teamwork. I submit that the type of bond is not universal and, equally, should not be a reason for concern. The objective of the leader should be to obtain a highly disciplined unit as previously defined that he has every confidence is fully ready to accomplish the mission despite any adversity.

FM 22-100 is an excellent source of information pertaining to qualities of a leader that inspire obedience of subordinates and create a climate that instills discipline in terms of self-control. More discussion is appropriate, however, on the use of the punishment form of discipline. As a fundamental rule, punishment must be expeditious and must fit the offense. The bureaucratic box that the military justice system has built around itself makes the first part of this principle extremely difficult. Rules of search and seizure, change of custody tracking, appeals, reviews, rights of the accused are only a few examples of the complexity of the system. It may be that the military justice system supports the commander and operates expeditiously, but I haven't seen any signs to support such a claim since the late 1960s.

The inefficiency of the formal military justice system gives more credence to the second half of the fundamental rule--punish to fit the offense. Many minor infractions can be handled at the squad or platoon level through counselling and remedial or additional training where appro-



priate. It seems more logical that a squad leader counsel a soldier who fails to be on time for formation and require him to report fifteen minutes prior to formation for five days, rather than to elevate the action up the chain of command. A soldier living off post might be moved into the barracks for two weeks for failure to make a morning formation. There are endless examples of actions which the leader can take to fit the punishment to the offense while handling the incident at the lowest possible level. This method affords the leader the opportunity for expeditious action without legal delays and in fact fosters a stronger relationship between the leader and subordinate.

When the chain of command determines that an offense requires a commander's action through nonjudicial means, referral should be rapid. Wait a week for a soldier to "see the old man" about his assault of PFC Smith (really it was a fist fight) and the delay degrades the effectiveness of the punishment. When a soldier appears before the company commander or battalion commander for Article 15, UCMJ action, the chain of command should accompany him and his counselling file should be present. The commander should first examine the counselling file to determine if and when initial counselling was done, if monthly counselling is taking place, if the chain of command has had other problems with the soldier and in the event of minor offenses if the chain of command has attempted alternative actions. Once the decision is made to pursue Article 15 action, it should be expeditious and fair. The commander should not accept excuses for delays but push to get all information, such as military police reports, necessary to consider and finalize the case. There is no justice in punishing a soldier for an offense sixty days after it was committed. Pun-

ishments should also be publicized so that other soldiers are aware that indiscipline will not be tolerated.

In those instances of serious acts of misconduct where court-martial action is deemed necessary, leaders should make every effort to expedite the action. If a soldier living in the barracks is pending a court-martial for drug sale/transfer, his association with other soldiers is not desirable. This individual serves as a disruption to the good order and discipline of the organization. Every effort should be made to isolate the soldier from the other soldiers without violating any of his rights. Likewise soldiers who are pending administrative discharge action because of apathy, unsuitability, homosexual acts or discharge in lieu of court-martial, should be separated from other soldiers. Use of an administrative holding detachment should be sought to get these disruptive ineffectives out of the barracks.

The number of soldiers who are court-martialled or chaptered out of the Army is extremely small in comparison to the number of devoted, concerned and motivated soldiers. It is regrettable that the few bad ones take such a disproportionate amount of the leader's time and cause the leader a tremendous amount of frustration and heartache. The critical factor for the leader to keep in mind is to carefully assess the facts surrounding any act of misconduct regardless of how serious or slight and attempt to determine the root problem. With every problem soldier the leader should ascertain if the soldier's failure is reflective of a failure on the leader's part. The leader must critically analyze the care he provided the soldier and determine if he really cared for him as he should. In too many cases the honest answer must be that the leader pretended to lead, but did not really fulfill the charge to "take care of soldiers."

### SUMMARY

Concern for and understanding of people is a prerequisite to leading soldiers.

To control things is an act of power, not leadership, for things have no motives. Power wielders may treat people as things. Leaders may not. All leaders are actual or potential power holders, but not all power holders are leaders.

The effectiveness of an organization is a reflection of the leadership. Two platoons formed of soldiers with like backgrounds, interest, education, abilities and goals would seem to be relatively equal. Such is not the case. The platoon with outstanding leadership will outperform the other in any measurable way. From fire team to battalion, the effectiveness of a unit is directly proportional to the quality of leadership at the top. A dynamic platoon sergeant who cares for soldiers will mold an outstanding platoon despite less than outstanding squad leaders. The platoon sergeant will maximize the abilities of his subordinate leaders. The same is true of a battalion--the strong commander with a sincere compassion for soldiers will motivate subordinates in molding a superb battalion.

The message is brilliantly clear, good soldiers don't make good leaders, but rather outstanding leaders develop motivated, disciplined, confident, proud soldiers. The leader who sets the standard by personal example, supervises, counsels and disciplines soldiers can say with confidence, "I take care of my soldiers." That same leader can also take great pride in the demonstrated proficiency of his unit and can proudly serve as an example of the highly capable noncommissioned officer or officer whose leadership standard is by example and not talk. That same leader's chest will swell with pride when he talks about "his soldiers" and if you look close you'll probably see a tear in his eye.

#### ENDNOTES

1. US Department of the Army, Field Manual 22-100, pp. Bib 1-Bib 6.
2. James M. Burns, Leadership, p. 20.
3. US Department of the Army, Field Manual 22-600-20, pp. 4-9.
4. US Army Recruiting Command, Standing Tall Looking Good, p. 8.
5. US Department of the Army, Field Manual 22-100, Coordinating Draft, January 1983.
6. US Department of the Army, Field Manual 22-101, p. iii.
7. Ibid., p.v.
8. Burns, p. 287.

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